

QUIET LODGE: A SHORT HISTORY OF THE PRESBURY HOUSE

Quiet Lodge, also known as the Presbury House, is located in the Edgewood Area, Aberdeen Proving Ground overlooking the Gunpowder River. The origin of the name "Quiet Lodge" is not known.

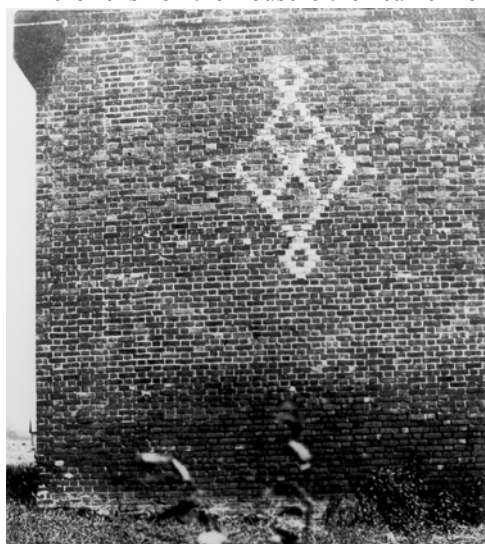


The land was originally deeded to John Collett, Jr. Collett had come from England in 1658 with his father and two brothers, but did not have the land surveyed until 1662. Upon his death in 1673, Collett left the property to his cousin, Matthew Gouldsmith. Gouldsmith, in turn, left the property to his niece, Martha Gouldsmith Presbury, the wife of James Presbury, the High Sheriff of Baltimore County. They had the land office resurvey the land in 1718. The site they selected for their house was on Elk Neck between Canal Creek (formerly called Elk or Elk Neck Creek) and Wright's Creek (formerly called Deep Creek).

Although the exact date of construction is uncertain, Presbury probably completed the house in 1720. The design was a 20-foot by 40-foot two-story brick house with a fireplace at either end. There was also a narrow attic running the entire length of the house. The bricks for the house either came from England as ballast aboard ships or were made locally, according to conflicting accounts. The wood supporting beams were all hand sawn or hewn from native timber. The fancy brickwork attested to the skill of the workers. As a "signature" in the bricks, the workers placed a patterned geometric diamond-shaped hallmark on the east wall. This hallmark was evidence of the pride shown by the masons. The pattern was created by a mixture of glazed brick and intricate masonry. Around the front door were placed bricks with the Presbury family information on them. Inside, the walls were simply plaster over the bare bricks. Large arched fireplaces were constructed at each end of the basement for cooking. A central staircase led to the second floor. There were two rooms upstairs and two rooms downstairs.

During the late 1770s, the Presbury house was closely connected with early Methodism. The house was frequently mentioned in the journals of early Methodist preachers. Francis Asbury, the first Methodist bishop in the United States, visited the house and stayed overnight approximately fourteen times between 1772 and 1777. The Reverend John Littlejohn was also known to have visited the house at least once in 1777.

In 1799, the house was purchased by Etienne J. Raphael (also spelled Raphael) and his wife Jane Elizabeth. The Raphaels were French refugees and parishioners of St. Ignatius Church. Etienne Raphael died in 1811 and was initially buried in a brick vault under what is currently Weide Field. He was later reburied



in the cemetery at St. Stephens Church in Bradshaw, MD. His son, Stephen J. Raphael lived in the house for many years until he sold it to General George Cadwalader in 1854. The Cadwalader family owned the land until 1917.



The U.S. Army purchased the entire peninsula known as Gunpowder Neck in October 1917. The Presbury house was included in the land appropriated for a chemical shell filling plant during World War I. The post was later named Edgewood Arsenal and grew in size steadily throughout the war. After the end of World War I and demobilization, part of Edgewood was redesignated Fort Hoyle and assigned to the Field Artillery in 1922. Fort Hoyle was named after Brigadier General Eli D. Hoyle of the 6th Field Artillery who died in 1921. At least one account stated that the Presbury house became the temporary headquarters of Fort Hoyle. In 1924, the

headquarters was moved to another building and the Presbury house was remodeled into officer's quarters. A frame addition and porch were added at this time. In 1940, Fort Hoyle was disestablished and the Presbury house became part of Edgewood Arsenal again.

The house continued to be used as officer's quarters and was remodeled periodically over the years. In 1958, the original floor joists and center supporting timbers were replaced. The original wooden banister, however, remained in place. Other modifications included an 18-foot by 20-foot two-story wing added to the east end of the house. This wing provided a kitchen on the first floor and another bedroom on the second floor. All the interior walls were covered with plasterboard and the floors were covered with wooden tiles. In the 1980s, the living room fireplace, covered with plasterboard for many years, was uncovered and brickwork completed to reflect the original brickwork of the house.

In 1974, Quiet Lodge was declared a national Historic Site. By the 1990s, the house ceased to be suitable for officer's quarters due to its age and restrictions on modifications. It is currently being used as offices for the Army Community Services.



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